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UNCLAS FRANKFURT 007722

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SMIG KCRM KWMN ELAB PGOV GM

SUBJECT: Major TIP Trial in Mannheim, Germany

Sensitive but unclassified; not for Internet distribution

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: Criminal proceedings began recently in Mannheim against six persons accused of trafficking approximately thirty Romanian women into Germany in 2003 and 2004. The young women were recruited with promises of employment as cooks and babysitters, but allegedly were beaten and raped (in a number of cases) and forced to work as prostitutes upon arrival in Germany.  
END SUMMARY.

Who are the Traffickers?

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¶2. (SBU) Five men and one woman (ages twenty-eight to forty-eight) have been charged in this case. Three of the group are Romanian citizens, one is a German, and the other two are Turks. The prosecutor's office in Mannheim characterized the three Romanians as key members of the trafficking ring. The German citizen is accused of prostituting the trafficked women -- as the operator of two brothels in Erfurt (state of Thuringia) where many of the women were ultimately forced to work.

No Money, No Way to Communicate, No Way Out

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¶3. (U) The Romanian women were brought to Germany between spring 2003 and 2004. They had been told they were going to work as babysitters and cooks, but upon arrival in Germany were forced into prostitution. The women found themselves in a situation in which they had no money, no means to communicate or ask for help (including language barriers), and no understanding of the local legal system. Those who initially refused to work as prostitutes were reportedly beaten and raped repeatedly. According to press reports, one woman who refused to work was beaten, threatened with death, and then taken to a party where she was gang-raped.

Court Proceedings in Mannheim

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¶4. (U) The trial just opened in Mannheim. Charges in the case include rape, forced prostitution, trafficking in persons, and illegal immigration. Eighteen additional court sessions are scheduled through the end of November. Post is following the case and will report further developments.

¶5. (U) This cable was coordinated with Embassy Berlin.

BODDE